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U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

FILE: LIN 03 003 55433 Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER

Date: MAY 03 2004

IN RE: Petitioner:  
Beneficiary:

PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

*Mari Johnson*

*Robert P. Wiemann*  
Robert P. Wiemann, Director  
Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The service center director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner is a travel agency that seeks to employ the beneficiary as a management analyst. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

The director denied the petition because the proffered position is not a specialty occupation and the beneficiary is not qualified to perform a specialty occupation. On appeal, counsel submits a brief.

The AAO will first address the director's conclusion that the position is not a specialty occupation.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (i)(1), defines the term "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires:

- (A) theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and
- (B) attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A), to qualify as a specialty occupation, the position must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the particular position;
- (2) The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, an employer may show that its particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree;
- (3) The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position; or
- (4) The nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) interprets the term "degree" in the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A) to mean not just any baccalaureate or higher degree, but one in a specific specialty that is directly related to the proffered position.

The record of proceeding before the AAO contains: (1) Form I-129 and supporting documentation; (2) the director's request for additional evidence; (3) the petitioner's response to the director's request; (4) the director's denial letter; and (5) Form I-290B and supporting documentation. The AAO reviewed the record in its entirety before issuing its decision.

The petitioner is seeking the beneficiary's services as a management analyst. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; a separate job description; and the petitioner's response to the director's request for evidence. According to this evidence, the beneficiary would perform duties that entail: reviewing forms and reports to identify problems and improvements; consulting on the operation of eight offices; working closely with travel analysts and office managers regarding management and hiring; interviewing personnel and conducting on-site observations; supervising professionals and delegating responsibilities; conducting reviews with office managers; preparing manuals and conducting training; and developing strategies for entering and remaining competitive in the new electronic marketplace. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree in tourism.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation. Citing to the Department of Labor's (DOL) *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (*Handbook*), the director noted that the minimum requirement for entry into the position was not a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent in a specific specialty. The director found further that the petitioner failed to establish any of the criteria found at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A).

On appeal, counsel states, in part, that as the DOL in its *Handbook* finds that most employers seek individuals with a master's degree for an entry-level management analyst position, the proffered position qualifies as a specialty occupation. Counsel states further that the proposed duties are so complex that a baccalaureate degree is required.

Upon review of the record, the petitioner has established none of the four criteria outlined in 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Therefore, the proffered position is not a specialty occupation.

The AAO turns first to the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) and (2): a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is the normal minimum requirement for entry into the particular position; a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations; or a particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree.

Factors often considered by CIS when determining these criteria include: whether the *Handbook* reports that the industry requires a degree; whether the industry's professional association has made a degree a minimum entry requirement; and whether letters or affidavits from firms or individuals in the industry attest that such firms "routinely employ and recruit only degreed individuals." See *Shanti, Inc. v. Reno*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 1151, 1165 (D.Min. 1999)(quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Slattery*, 764 F. Supp. 872, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1991)).

The AAO routinely consults the *Handbook* for its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. The AAO does not concur with counsel that the proffered position is that of a management analyst. None of the beneficiary's job duties entails the level of responsibility of that occupation. Furthermore, a review of the Management Analyst job category in the *Handbook* finds that most management analysts work in management, scientific, and technical consulting firms, in computer systems design and related services firms, and for Federal, State, and local governments. Rather, the proffered position is similar to that of a general manager/operations manager. No evidence in the *Handbook* indicates that a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, is required for a general manager/operations manager job.

Regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry, the petitioner submitted Internet job postings for management analysts. There is no evidence, however, to show that the employers issuing those postings are

similar to the petitioner, or that the advertised positions are parallel to the instant position. One of the advertised positions is that of a management analyst for Foster City, California, whose duties entail, in part, providing staff assistance to the City Manager's department. Another position is that of a health management consultant for a global and outsourcing firm, with duties that entail, in part, assisting in the development of strategy and design consulting. Another position is that of a program management analyst for Carlson Companies, which is a global leader in the marketing, travel, and hospitality industries, employing about 190,000 people in more than 140 countries. It is noted that, although a bachelor's degree is required for this position, no specific field of study is specified. Thus, the advertisements have little relevance.

The record also does not include any evidence from professional associations regarding an industry standard, or documentation to support the complexity or uniqueness of the proffered position. The petitioner has, thus, not established the criteria set forth at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) or (2).

The AAO now turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(3) – the employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position. As counsel does not address this issue on appeal, it will not be discussed further.

Finally, the AAO turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(iii)(A)(4) – the nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

To the extent that they are depicted in the record, the duties do not appear so specialized and complex as to require the highly specialized knowledge associated with a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty. Therefore, the evidence does not establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(4).

As related in the discussion above, the petitioner has failed to establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. Accordingly, the AAO shall not disturb the director's denial of the petition.

The director also found that the beneficiary would not be qualified to perform the duties of the proffered position if the job had been determined to be a specialty occupation. However, as the AAO is dismissing the appeal because the job is not a specialty occupation, it will not discuss the beneficiary's qualifications.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not sustained that burden.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed. The petition is denied.